

## Message Text

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USIA-15 OMB-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 NIC-01 EB-11 COME-00

LAB-06 TRSE-00 /121 W

----- 101774

R 091624Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2843

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

US MISSION USEC BRUSSELS 839

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PINT SP PO

SUBJ: SPANISH REACTION TO PORTUGUESE POLITICAL EVENTS

1. SUMMARY: SPANISH MEDIA AND POPULATION CONTINUE TO FOLLOW CLOSELY DEVELOPING SITUATION IN PORTUGAL. IN GENERAL SPANISARDS HAVE BEEN SURPRISED, IN SOME CASES SHOCKED, BY SPEED WITH WHICH 48-YEAR OLD PORTUGUESE REGIME WAS OVERTURNED, SEEM-INGLY WITHOUT ANY RESISTANCE BY PRESUMED SUPPORTERS. ALTHOUGH VIEWS OF SPANISH MILITARY ARE MIXED, SOME RANKING OFFICERS FEAR PORTUGUESE ARMY MIGHT PROVE INCAPABLE OF MAINTAINING ORDER SHOULD DISTURBANCES ARISE AS CONSEQUENCE OF ACCELERATED POLITICIZATION. SPANISH SECURITY SERVICES FEAR THAT PORTUGAL MIGHT BECOME HAVEN FOR TERRORIST OR SEPARATIST GROUPS. LOCAL BANKING COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED BY REPORTS OF WORKER TAKEOVER OF PLANTS AND COMPLETE REVERSAL IN SYNDICAL ORGANIZATIONS. GOS, THROUGH STATEMENTS BY THREE KEY MINISTERS, HAS REITERATED COMMITMENT OF ARIAS NAVARRO GOVERNMENT FEB 12

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TO LIBERALIZE SPANISH POLITICAL AND SYNCICAL INSTITUTIONS.

END SUMMARY

2. SPANISH MEDIA CONTINUED TO GIVE PROMINENT AND FULL COVERAGE TO PORTUGUESE EVENTS AND SEVERAL WEEKLY MAGAZINES WITH NATIONAL CIRCULATION HAVE PUBLISHED FEATURE ARTICLES. COMMENTATORS OF PRINCIPAL NEWSPAPERS HAVE GENERALLY APPROVED TREND OF POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION IN PORTUGAL. SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE WRITTEN LENGTHY ARTICLES ANALYZING DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGAL IN MANNER SUGGESTING ANALOGY WITH SPAIN. THEIR CONCLUSIONS WERE THAT IMMOBILISM WITH RESPECT TO GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS LEAD INEVITABLY TO TYPE OF UPHEAVAL EXPERIENCED IN PORTUGAL. COMMENTATORS SAW NO OTHER COURSE FOR SPAIN THAN TO INSURE THAT SPANISH POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS ARE LIBERALIZED PRIOR TO FRANCO'S DEATH. RIGHT WING PRESS LED BY MOVEMENT'S DAILY "ARRIBA" HAD ADOPTED RESERVED STAND AND, IN ONE EDITORIAL, PRAISED SALAZAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND IN ANOTHER INSTANCE CRITICIZED OTHER COMMENTATORS FOR INDULGING IN DOUBLE TALK BY IMPLYING THAT THERE WERE PARALLELS BETWEEN PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH POLITICAL SITUATIONS.

3. MEDIA COMMENTATORS, POLITICAL AND MILITARY CONTACTS OF EMBASSY AND MAN-IN-THE-STREET, HAVE ALL BEEN TREMENDOUSLY IMPRESSED BY SPEED WITH WHICH THE 48-YEAR OLD POLITICAL SYSTEM IN PORTUGAL WAS TURNED OUT, PRACTICALLY WITHOUT ANYONE HAVING COME TO ITS SUPPORT, EVEN THOUGH "ELECTIONS" LAST FALL GAVE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT TO CAETANO. WHAT SPANIARDS NOTE EVEN MORE IS FACT THAT THE ENTIRE SPANISH-TYPE CORPORATE PARAPHERNALIA OF A SINGLE NATIONAL MOVEMENT, SYSTEM OF NATIONAL SYNDICATES, YOUTH ORGANIZATION, ETC. PROVED INEFFECTUAL IN SUPPORTING THE REGIME AND FELL APART. SUCH A TURNABOUT IN PORTUGUESE POLITICAL LIFE HAS STIMULATED SPANIARDS TO THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT SOLIDITY OF SPANISH INSTITUTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN SET UP TO CARRY ON AFTER FRANCO'S DEATH.

4. SPANIARDS HAVE NOT PAID MUCH ATTENTION TO PORTUGUESE EVENTS IN RECENT YEARS, REFLECTING LACK OF INTEREST AND GENERAL CONDESCENDING ATTITUDE TOWARDS PORTUGUESE. CIRCUMSTANCES OF PORTUGUESE UPHEAVAL NOW FORCE THEM TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TAKE NOTICE OF DEVELOPMENTS.

5. ATTITUDES OF SPANISH MILITARY ABOUT EVENTS IN PORTUGAL LACK FIRM CONSENSUS. SPANISH OFFICERS HAVE GREAT RESPECT AND TRUST FOR THEIR PORTUGUESE COUNTERPARTS BUT SOME BELIEVE THAT RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF PORTUGUESE TROOPS (APROX 50,000) ON DUTY IN METROPOLITAN PORTUGAL MIGHT PROVE TOO FEW TO CONTROL DISTURBANCES WHICH

COULD RESULT FROM EXCESSIVE POLITIZATION. ONE HIGHLY RESPECTED FORMER SPANISH AMBASSADOR BELIEVES THAT THE SPANISH MILITARY HIERARCHY AND LOWER RANKING OFFICERS WILL BE TREMENDOUSLY INFLUENCED BY THE PORTUGUESE EXAMPLE SHOULD THE POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION COME ABOUT WITHOUT SUCH DISTURBANCES. EXAMPLE OF THE MILITARY IN PORTUGAL OBTAINING SUCH WIDE POPULAR SUPPORT BECAUSE OF ITS ACTION AS A DOMESTIC LIBERALIZING FORCE COULD PROVE INFECTIOUS AMONG SOME OFFICERS IN SPANISH ARMED FORCES. AT SAME TIME LATTER ARE NOT EXPOSED TO STRAINS SUCH AS THOSE WHICH HAVE BURDENED PORTUGUESE DURING PAST 11 YEARS BECAUSE OF THE COLONIAL WARS. THERE IS NO MALAISE IN SPANISH ARMED FORCES SUCH AS THAT WHICH WAS CATALYST IN POLITICIZING PORTUGUESE ARMY.

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6. SPANISH SECURITY OFFICIAL S HAVE INDICATED TO EMBASSY CONTACTS THAT THEY ARE NOT CONFIDENT THAT PORTUGUESE WILL MAINTAIN LEVEL OF SECURITY TO PREVENT PORTUGAL FROM OFFERING REFUGE TO TERRORISTS TO CARRY ON OPERATIONS AGAINST

SPAIN. THIS IS SENSITIVE ISSUE FOR SPANIARDS, PARTICULARLY SINCE THEY ALREADY FEEL THAT THE FRENCH ARE NOT DOING ENOUGH TO CONTROL DISSIDENT BASQUE ORGANIZATIONS IN SOUTHWESTERN FRANCE. SECONDLY, WHEREAS PYRENEES OFFER BETTER FACILITIES FOR CONTROLLING BORDER CROSSING, OPEN CHARACTER OF BORDER WITH PORTUGAL WOULD GREATLY FACILITATE INFILTRATION OF AGENTS, TERRORISTS, AND OTHERS.

7. SEVERAL SPANISH SOCIALISTS HAVE TOLD EMBOFF OF THEIR FEARS THAT PERMISSION FOR PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY TO OPERATE OPENLY AND POSSIBILITY OF ITS INCLUSION IN PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT MIGHT AUGMENT RESPECTABILITY OF SPANISH CP THEREBY UNDERMINING SOCIALIST CHANCES. AGAINST BACKGROUND OF CURRENT DISARRAY IN SPANISH CP, ANYTHING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHICH WOULD POLISH UP IMAGE OF COMMUNIST PARTY IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY IF IT BECAME MEMBER OF GOVERNMENTS OF BOTH PORTUGAL AND FRANCE, COULD ENHANCE OUTLOOK FOR SPANISH CP.

8. SPANIARDS HAVE NOTED COUNCIL OF EUROPE HAS WELCOMED CURRENT POLITICAL TREND IN PORTUGAL AND HELD OUT PROSPECT OF ITS AJMISSION AS MEMBER PROVIDING THAT IT FOLLOWS THROUGH WITH PROPOSED DEMOCRATICIZATION OF ITS POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. AGAINST BACKDROP OF APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL EXPLORATORY VISIT BY PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADER SOARES TO SOME EX CAPITALS OVER PAST WEEKEND, THIS OVERTURE BY COUNCIL OF EUROPE IS FIRST TANGIBLE EVIDENCE IN SPANISH EYES OF EUROPEAN READINESS TO WELCOME A COUNTRY IN PROCESS OF CHANGING FROM AUTHORITARIAN TO MORE DECOCRATIC REGIME.

9. IN BANKING AND TRADE CIRCLES THERE IS SOME APPREHENSION ABOUT TREND WHICH EVENTS HAVE TAKEN IN PORTUGAL, PARTICULARLY LABOR TAKEOVERS OF PLANTS, ETC. ANNOUNCED PORTUGUESE RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTS ARE NOT LIKELY TO EFFECT SPANISH EXPORT SITUATION TOO MUCH, INASMUCH AS THEIR BILATERAL TRADE IS RELATIVELY SMALL.

10. GOS HAS YET TO MAKE ANY OFFICIAL STATEMENT ABOUT EVENTS IN PORTUGAL. ISSUE OF PORTUGUESE SITUATION HAS BEEN RAISED IN TWO SUCCESSIVE CABINET MEETINGS APRIL 26 AND MAY 3. MINISTER OF INFORMATION PIO CABANILLAS ON MAY 3, MINISTER OF SYNDICATES FERNANDEZ SORDO ON MAY 7, AND FIRST VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR GARCIA HERNANDEZ ON MAY 8, HOWEVER, MADE STATEMENTS REITERATING ARIAS NAVARRO GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO CARRY OUT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF LIBERALIZATION PROGRAM AS SET FORTH IN PRESIDENT'S PROGRAMATIC SPEECH FEBRUARY 12. THEIR COMMENTS ARE IMPORTANT INASMUCH AS THEY INDICATE THAT GOS INTENDS TO

STICK TO PATH TRACED BY ARIAS NAVARRO DESPITE CAUTIONARY  
STATEMENTS MADE BY FORMER MADRID CAPTAIN GENERAL GARCIA  
REBULL, AND FORMER MINISTER OF LABOR GIRON, PREVIOUS WEEK  
(MADRID 2763). GOS APPARENTLY DOES NOT WANT TO APPEAR TO  
BE BACKTRACKING ON PRESIDENT'S PROGRAK AT TIME WHEN EVENTS  
ARE MOVING SO RAPIDLY TOWARD LIBERALIZATION IN NEIGHBORING  
PORTUGAL, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF GENERAL POPULAR APPRIVAL  
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OF PORTUGUESE TRENDS. TEST OF GOS DETERMINATION TO STICK  
TO PRSIDENT'S PROGRAM WILL BE END OF MONTH WHEN NEW DRAFT  
LAW ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS SCHEDULED TO BE PRESENTED TO  
THE CORTES.  
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## Message Attributes

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